



# AROUND THE HOUSE

## Holiday Thoughts -Mary K. Vaughn

As we approach the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays it seemed a good time to talk about Community Service. This is the time of year when people who have more than they need, think about giving to others. And it is the time when people who are in need, expect to receive special gifts of food and personal items.

Community Service is one way that even those who don't have a lot of material things, can make a contribution to their community. Community Service is not only a good idea, but for public housing residents, it is a requirement.

During July of this year, HUD staff from the Kansas City office, conducted a review of the Wichita Housing Authority's public housing Community Service and Self-

Sufficiency program. Their goal was to determine if all eligible residents were participating in the program as required.

Persons who are required to participate in the Community Service program were notified by letter in September, 2003 and each time a lease was signed after that time. If you are not sure if you are required to participate in Community Service, these are the requirements: not working, older than 17 and younger than 62, and disabled. If you fit this criteria you are *required* to perform 8 hours of community service each month. If you do not fit this criteria you must request a waiver from the Community Service requirement from your Property Manager.

Why should you participate in the Community Service program?

1. *It is required.* If anyone in the household fits the criteria and does not participate in Community Service—the whole household could lose its lease!

2. It can help you develop new skills and make contacts for future employment.

How do you get involved in Community Service?

Contact the United Way of the Plains Volunteer Center at 267-0202.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, remember—you've been blessed with housing. Community Service is a way you can be a blessing to someone else!



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### *Housing Services Department Mission*

*... to provide housing  
and related services  
to benefit the citizens  
and neighborhoods of  
Wichita*

# Milestones

Dear Readers,

*It has been a great pleasure to be the editor of the Around the House Newsletter for the past nine months. This is my last contribution. Like any good news organization, the editor works with a dedicated group of contributors to come up with articles, features and story ideas. Providing real life success stories, stories of individual personal achievements, stories of hope and inspiration, as well as timely information about the programs and services Housing Services makes available has and continues to be our goal with each edition of the Around the House Newsletter. I had a good time. Now my name like yours, is on the mailing list. I can't wait to read the next edition!*

Deborah Moore

## Excuse our mess!

The Housing Services Office at 332 N. Riverview is being enlarged so that all staff, including Section 8, can be housed in one location. This will make it easier for all our clients to have a convenient "one-stop" location for all housing related services. Construction is expected to be complete by May, 2005.

During construction all office locations will remain the same. Visitors to 332 N. Riverview will, however, be directed by signage to alternate entrances as the work proceeds.

## Around the House

### From the Director's Chair

Mary K. Vaughn



As you see in this issue's "Milestones" column, former Around the House editor Deborah Moore, has left the Wichita Housing Services Department. She has accepted a position in California and we wish Deborah well!

In the meantime, those of us who are in Wichita are in for some exciting times ahead. Our new City Manager has hit the ground running and he has lots of ideas to enhance the important work that we do in the Housing Department.

In addition to the City Manager's impact, we are also on the verge of finalizing a strategic plan for Wichita. This plan will be the result of the Visioneering Wichita initiative, and will help shape the future of our community. I'm sure you will agree that housing is an important part of that future.

Now more than ever we must focus on improving efficiency and everyone doing their part to make housing a valuable asset in this

community.

I encourage everyone to pay attention to all of the information in this newsletter. Do you community service. Complete the HUD survey. Follow the Section 8 rules. We are doing our best to improve our service delivery through office improvements and new technology.

## HUD Service and Satisfaction Survey for Public Housing

-Tom Byler

It's that time of year again—time for the annual Service and Satisfaction Survey. Following is information every public housing resident needs to know:

**What is the Survey?** The Resident Service and Satisfaction Survey was developed with the help of Public Housing Agencies (PHAs), resident leaders and representatives of the industry across the country, to give HUD officials an idea of how well a Housing Authority is doing. It is sent to a sample of public housing residents at each PHA in the country, every year, to find out how satisfied they are with the living conditions of their

unit or development.

**How will HUD use residents' input?** Your satisfaction and experience with your living conditions will be included in HUD's yearly evaluation of your housing agency—the Wichita Housing Authority. This survey is part of HUD's commitment to monitoring PHAs.

**Who will be asked to fill it out?** Public Housing residents throughout the nation will be included in the survey process. Because it is sent to a sample, not all residents will receive a survey. Survey participants will be chosen randomly using a computer program. Since

the survey is conducted annually, residents who don't receive a survey this year, may receive one in future years.

**When will it come?** The surveys should arrive in mailboxes sometime between November 23, 2004 and January 31, 2005.

Be sure and follow the directions which come with your survey—do not turn surveys in to your Property Manager or Housing Services staff!



## Automation Has Arrived at the Wichita Section 8 Office

—Gail Lotson

**Staff of the Housing Services Department Section 8 Division** is excited about the arrival of automated inspection equipment. Starting December 1, 2004, Section 8 Neighborhood Inspectors will use handheld inspection computers instead of the traditional clipboard, when they make their initial, annual, special, re-inspection and quality inspections. This electronic device (pictured here), will enable inspec-



tors to interface directly with the current inspection database and eliminate handwritten notes which have to be typed in later. The new system will also automatically schedule inspections and will generate written re-

ports for landlords and clients regarding results of the inspection, which will be mailed no later than the next business day. Clients and landlords can expect more efficient inspection services with this new system. The system was presented at the annual landlord meeting on November 5, 2004.

## CURRENT HAP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

<i>Month</i>	<i>Mail Date</i>
NOVEMBER	OCTOBER 29, 2004
DECEMBER	NOVEMBER 30, 2004
JANUARY 2005	JANUARY 3, 2005
FEBRUARY 2005	JANUARY 28, 2005
MARCH 2005	FEBRUARY 25, 2005

## Relocation Reminders for Section 8 Clients

—Gail Lotson

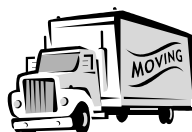
Section 8 clients who wish to relocate, are reminded that relocation requests are accepted at the time of the annual re-certification. Housing Leasing Specialists will conduct annual re-certification meetings 60-90 days prior to the re-certification date. Anyone wishing to relocate must provide information re-

garding the entire family.

Section 8 clients wishing to relocate must keep in mind the following:

It takes a minimum of 45 days for paperwork, initial inspection of the new unit and approval—prior to notification that the request is approved. In order to relocate, a cli-

ent must be in good standing with the Housing Authority, the current landlord and unit.



## Holiday Office Schedule



In order for **Housing Services** staff to have time to spend with their families in the upcoming **Thanksgiving** and **Christmas** holidays, we will be **CLOSED** on the following days:

**Thursday, November 25**  
**Friday, November 26**  
**Friday, December 24**  
**Friday, December 31**





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## Winter is Around the Corner - Is Your Home Ready?

-Michael Hollimon

Following are some tips for winterizing your home which should make you and your family comfortable without excessive heating bills.

**Exterior.** Check your roof for damaged or missing shingles—replace them at once. Also check the flashing (tar) around chimney and other roof projections. See any cracks? Get them repaired. Clean out gutters and downspouts by removing leaves, dirt and debris. Then wash out the gutters with your garden hose. Replace cracked and/or broken window glass and re-

glaze window sashes as needed. You can make storm windows using clear plastic film and a few inexpensive frames. Ask about this at your local hardware store. Checking for and repairing damaged siding shingles or cracked and peeling paint, can save costly repairs in the long run. All of these exterior tips should be followed right away—before the cold, ice and snow set in!!

**Interior.** Check the weatherstripping around doors and if it is damaged, replace it right away. Applying plastic

to the inside of windows is an inexpensive way to reduce air infiltration until you can replace the windows. Remove window air conditioners or winterize them according to the manufacturer's instructions. Change smoke detector batteries—a good reminder is to do this when you turn your clocks back—if you didn't do it last month, it's not too late. Change the filter in your furnace with the proper sized replacement.